THE ROAD TO THE NORTH POLE

FIRST SERIES.

St. Jude's Church

SUNDAY SCHOOL

MELBOURNE

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William Wambach

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ESQUIMAUX IGLOOS.

THE ROAD TO THE NORTH POLE

FIRST SERIES

THE EXPEDITIONS OF CAPTAIN CHARLES FRANCIS HALL IN THE GEORGE HENRY AND THE POLARIS

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INTRODUCTION.

STORIES of life and adventure on the sea have always had a great charm for young readers. And of this class the narratives of attempts made to reach the North Pole possess the strongest fascination. They are for the most part tragic, since few expeditions have entered the Arctic Circle, and, after any lengthened stay there, brought back all their brave officers and crew. Not unfrequently, especially in recent years, the many have started, but, alas! the few have returned.

Some, looking mainly at the terrible sufferings endured and the loss of life, feel that the gains are not worth the loss. But this feeling will never stop Arctic exploration. Nor is it at all clear why it should. The men who go up to the barren and ice-bound regions of the Pole do not go for selfish reasons. There are no harder fields for physical endurance, and no region of adventure can show nobler types of Christian manhood.

The expeditions of Frobisher, of Ross, of Parry, of Franklin, and a host of others, have extended geographical knowledge, have collected an enormous amount of precious scientific information, have extended commercial enterprise, and have

shown to what heights of courage, endurance, and noble self-sacrifice our human nature can rise.

Among the Arctic explorers of this century the name of Captain Hall ranks high. He was a man of enthusiastic nature and of Christian principle. He was filled with affection for the Esquimaux, and with a desire to discover for the good of the world the road to the North Pole. In the pursuit of these objects he spent many long years, and for them he at length laid down his life. The story of his first and last expeditions is told in this little volume, in a way to interest young readers.

It is a picture of real, not imaginary life. It brings together a large number of curious and interesting facts. It carries the boy or girl who reads it far away into the dreary regions of the Ice King. It has this advantage over the ordinary story, viz., that it is all true, and it gives pictures of actual life and real deeds.

The writer hopes that no boy or girl can read this wonderful story without feeling the desire, so strong in the heart of Captain Hall, that the hearts of Christian people may be stirred up to send the Gospel to the Esquimaux; and without seeing, as he often did, in times of great peril and danger, how the Great Father in heaven watches over and protects them that trust in Him.

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THE HEAD OF AN ARCTIC REINDEER.

PART I.
THE EXPEDITION IN THE GEORGE HENRY.

CHAPTER I.

THE START.

CHARLES FRANCIS HALL started on his first expedition to the North, from New London, Connecticut, United States, in May, 1860, in the barque George Henry, accompanied by the schooner Rescue, of Arctic celebrity; the entire crew of both

vessels consisting of only thirty-one souls. Hall was possessed with a desire to discover whether any survivors of Sir John Franklin's expedition were living among the Esquimaux, and, for this purpose, he raised a subscription which enabled him to start. He was going forth to a region altogether unknown to him, and he even seems to have had small experience of the sea, for on the fifth day after sailing, he writes: 'More miserable days than these past few have been to me, it would be difficult to imagine. And why? Because of sea-sickness. And what *is* sea-sickness? Can any one tell unless they have experienced it? I imagine not; nor, perhaps, can many describe it who come under its influence; I know *I* cannot well do so. I have felt myself swung, tumbled, jammed, knocked, struck, rocked, turned, screwed, slewed, warped, pitched forward and backward, tossed up and down, this way and that way, round and round, crossways and kit-a-cornered in every possible way.' This seems to have gone on for twelve whole

days; but after that he quickly recovered, and at once set to work.

Nothing escaped his notice, and soon he found intense enjoyment in his sailor life; storms even were a charm to him, and he tells us, 'Rarely did I enjoy myself more than when those storms encountered us. It seemed to me as if no one could, to the fullest extent, appreciate the beauty, the grandeur, the greatness of God's creation, but in experiencing a storm at sea. Watching it as I did, firmly wedged against the mast, with my arm encircling a cluster of ropes, I could keep my place, and as I stood there I could study nature and nature's God.'

Porpoises soon gave place to whales as the vessels neared the northern coast. On June 20th, he writes: 'A good run with a fair breeze since yesterday, approaching the north axis of the earth! Ay, nearing the goal of my fondest wishes. Everything relating to the Arctic zone is deeply interesting to me. I love the snows, the ice, the icebergs, the fauna, the flora of the North! I

love the circling sun, the long day, the Arctic night, when the soul can commune with God in silent and reverential awe. I am on a mission of love, I feel to be in the performance of a duty I owe to mankind—myself—God! Thus feeling, I am strong at heart, full of faith, ready to do or to die in the cause I have espoused.' These words show what an honest, brave heart Hall possessed.

Icebergs soon after this appeared in all shapes and forms, close alongside the vessel. One day, the sea being calm, a boat was lowered, and oft went Hall, not content till he had reached the very top of one of the largest of these icebergs; but on his way down he hurt his foot severely, and was laid up for some days.

On July 4th, the George Henry sailing up Davis's Straits sighted Greenland, and soon after two Esquimaux came off and landed themselves, their kyacks (small boats), and all their possessions on board. These two men, Sampson and Ephraim by name, were very useful as pilots. The fogs were

very treacherous, and the two ships had much difficulty in anchoring with safety in the Holsteinborg harbour.

Hall was overjoyed to step on Arctic land, and as Captain Budington, who commanded the George Henry, knew Governor Elberg, he was received very kindly. The little town is under Danish government, and the sight of the Danish flag waving in the breeze gave it an appearance of civilization. A great number of the Greenland Esquimaux are of Danish descent. Hall stayed some time in the Holsteinborg district, where he had a most happy visit. The people were as kind as they could possibly be, and showed him everything there was to be seen.

It is difficult to believe that mosquitoes were as great a nuisance there as in warm climates, yet on one of the first days Hall spent on shore, he and Sterry, one of the crew, went up a mountain and were worried beyond description, and constantly bitten by these insects in the hot sunshine. During the walk they found a lake. 'This lake,'

writes Hall, 'was fed by various small streams that were leaping down from the snowy mountains, and, if it had got no other name, I termed it "William Sterry" lake. We walked along it and saw numerous salmon, small trout (three of which we caught with our hands), and many skulls and horns of deer. It was now dinner time and our appetite was well sharpened by the exercise we had enjoyed. Accordingly a fire was lit whereby to cook the fish, though at first I was greatly puzzled how we were to get material for a fire; but Sterry, who had been so much in this Arctic region, well knew its resources. Where all looked barren to me, he soon found moss and low brush-wood like the running hemlock of the States. Dwarf willow, heather, and small under-growth wood of various descriptions are intermixed. The dead wood and old leaves all added to the growing portions of this fuel, and it was with this that Sterry quickly made a fire. A result followed, however, we little expected. The abundance of such

fuel all around caused the fire to spread rapidly, and as a strong breeze was now blowing, it soon got beyond our control. Sterry only said, "Never mind, let it burn," so I quietly made myself content and sat down to the primitive meal.' When Sterry and Hall reached the town of Holsteinborg, they found the people much alarmed by the fire upon the mountain. They feared that it had diminished their supply of winter fuel to a serious extent. Hall apologised for their thoughtlessness; and fortunately the fire soon went out.

The great festival of the year in these parts is the King of Denmark's birthday. His Danish Majesty supplies the good cheer, and Europeans as well as Esquimaux join in the festivity. In Christian knowledge and in education the people make great progress under Danish teachers. Children have to learn long words—they can pronounce words of fifty letters. As in Denmark, so in Greenland, the religion is Lutheran. There are ministers and churches; and missionary

work is very energetically carried on, and much is done to instruct the people and make them happy.

After all the hospitality shown to them on shore, the officers and crew of the George Henry thought they would like to entertain some of the people. 'The Lieutenant-Governor and lady, the schoolmaster and his wife, with their infant child at her back, and almost all the town were there. Never did the George Henry and her crew look happier, and the vessel was gaily decorated for the occasion. In the merry dance the Esquimaux did their very best, and our bold sailor boys showed themselves not a whit behind. After the ball we succeeded in getting up some singing, below in the cabin. During the whole evening unbounded happiness reigned on board. Several presents were made, especially to the schoolmaster's wife, who received them with much modesty and pleasure. At length the party broke up, and our visitors departed for the shore in their numerous kyacks and family boats.'

Before leaving these parts Hall witnessed a famous athletic feat; one of the Esquimaux turned summersaults *in the water seated in his kyack.* This is a feat performed only by a few, and requires great skill and strength to do it, and failure in the

AN ESQUIMAUX BOAT-FEAT.

stroke of the oar as the man passes from the centre to the surface, that is, when his head and body are under water, might terminate fatally. No one will attempt this feat unless a companion in his kyack is near. Another

feat worth seeing is when an Esquimaux runs his kyack, while seated in it, over another. Getting some distance off, he strikes briskly, and pushes forward. In an instant he is over, striking with the upturned peak of his own kyack the one he wishes to ride over nearly amidships, and at right angles. These feats are rewarded by presents of tobacco.

Hall reluctantly left these kind people, after making suitable purchases of articles which would be useful later on. Dogs for sledge work in particular he was fortunate in obtaining. The Governor's experience of these animals was very valuable, and he chose six of them. The following were their Greenland names :—Kingo, Barbekark, Ei, pronounced Ee; Me-lak-tor, the leader; Me-rok, Me-lak, or Ki-o-koo-lik.

Hall, on leaving, writes : 'I rejoiced when I first put my foot where I was now bidding farewells with tears. Then I rejoiced that God had brought me in safety, that I might put my foot upon Arctic soil. Not a

soul did I know in the whole North. In seventeen days I was acquainted with all Holsteinborg. I now leave it with regret; I sorrow at parting from so noble a people. Kyacks in large numbers danced round us as we made our way to the ship. I remarked to the Governor that with all our progress in ship-building, we had made nothing to equal the speed of a kyack.'

CHAPTER II.

AN ESQUIMAUX HOME.

After leaving Greenland, the George Henry and the Rescue sailed for the Far North, and very rough they found the sea in crossing Davis's Straits. On and on they went for many days, until Kow-tukjua Harbour was reached. They found the life among the Esquimaux living there comical and interesting. Hall always speaks in the kindest way of the Esquimaux, whom he describes by their native name of 'Innuit,' meaning 'the people,' or (as they understand it) 'our people,' as distinguished from foreigners. This name will also be used to describe them here. 'These savages,' he says, 'though living in the coldest and most

comfortless dens of the earth, are wonderfully cheerful, always on the grin. They grin when they rub their nose with snow, when they blow their fingers, when they lubricate their hides inside and outside with the fat of the seal. Truly they are a kind-hearted, hospitable, and well-disposed race of people.'

If we want to know something of real Arctic life among the natives, we cannot do better than go with Charles Hall to an Esquimaux village. He went one day in a boat with Smith, one of the crew, and landed in a lovely little harbour. 'Here there was a complete Esquimaux village. All the inhabitants, men, women, children, and dogs, rushed out to meet us. Smith and I walked up to one of the tents, intending to make a call. Smith lifted up the folding door and put in his head, but soon pulled it out, saying, "Whew! I'm not going in there. It smells horribly." He then turned away, and I went in. Bowing down almost to a horizontal position, in went head, shoulders,

body and all. The next second I found myself close to a lot of Esquimaux, all strong fellows, crowded together, each with a knife! But there was no cause for alarm. The knives were being used simply for cutting off strips of seal, to be thrust into the widely opened mouths of the hungry people before me.

'Quite at the back of the tent I found an Esquimaux friend, Koojesse. They were all enjoying some smoking-hot seal-blood! As I told them I should like to taste any food they had to spare, one of the women gave me from the stewpan some seal-meat, also some seal-blood. I managed to eat the meat, and then determined to try the seal-blood. To my surprise, I found it excellent. The people were all delighted; and to the kind woman who presided, and gave the food to each one, I gave a gay-coloured handkerchief. She was in great delight over this, and the whole company were very friendly. Soon afterwards I crawled out of the tent on all fours. While in this village I called

at another tent, and was treated to a liberal piece of "black skin," after it had been well cleansed by the free application of a lady's tongue!'

After such visits it must have been good to get out into the fresh, pure air again, for certainly the Esquimaux are not a clean people. Their style of dress makes them look more like wild beasts dressed up in warm skins; yet these skins keep out the severe cold. The women look even stranger than the men, for their coats are made all in one piece, without button of any kind, and are slipped over the head like a frock; and they always have a baby-pouch on the shoulders. The women carry very small children in a way that seems very extraordinary to an English boy or girl. The babies are put quite naked into a hood, slung over their mother's shoulders, and kept warm by being pressed close to their mother's skin.

The Esquimaux are a very hardy, strong people, in spite of their unwillingness to

wash themselves in clean water. A baby's face is very seldom washed; usually it is done by licking it all over with the tongue, and yet even this is seldom done.

CHAPTER III.

LOSS OF THE RESCUE—THE AURORA BOREALIS —LIFE IN AN IGLOO.

On September 27th, 1860, while the vessels were at anchor, a terrible gale sprang up, which wrecked the Rescue, drove a whaler called the Georgiana on shore, and nearly proved the destruction of the George Henry and all on board. This terrible storm of September 27th upset many plans. At one time it seemed as though all the boats must be lost. The Rescue was dragged from her anchorage and dashed on the rocks with terrific fury, and soon became a complete wreck; but not before two brave men from the George Henry set off to save the crew in a whale-boat. The wind having lulled a little, a mate named

Rogers and a seaman ventured through the boiling waves. In a few minutes the boat was under the Rescue's projecting bowsprit, and though they had to be exceedingly careful, speedily Captain Tyson and all on board the Rescue got into the boat. A short time more, and all were safely standing on the George Henry's decks.

Soon after this great storm the Aurora began to appear in all its brilliancy. Those who live in the southern latitudes can have no idea of the majesty of the scenes witnessed at night in the Far North. One night Hall writes, 'It seems to me as though the very doors of heaven have been opened to-night, so mighty and beauteous and marvellous were the waves of golden light that a few minutes ago swept across the azure deep, breaking forth anon into floods of wondrous glory. God made His wonderful works to-night to be remembered. I have witnessed many displays of the Aurora since making anchorage in this harbour, a great many of surpassing magnificence, but this night I had

gone below again when Captain Budington called, "Come above, Hall, at once! The world is on fire!"

'We looked, we saw, we trembled, for even as we gazed the whole belt of the Aurora became alive with flashes, twisting and twining like enormous serpents; sheets of golden light, which turned into the colours of the rainbow. We actually said, "Hark!" as though such a display was impossible without noise. But no noise; all was silence! It was a night never to be forgotten. Even the natives many of them had never seen anything brighter. The finest displays of the Aurora only last a few moments.'

Captain Hall met some wonderfully pleasant Esquimaux, and though their names seem very odd, we must try to remember a few of them, as we shall often meet them again. Two in particular we shall constantly travel with, a man named Ebierbing and his wife, Tookoolito. They first met Hall on board the George Henry in Field Bay. Ebierbing had safely piloted Captain Par-

ker's ship to this part from Niountelik, in Northumberland Inlet. Hall writes thus of the meeting: 'November 2, 1860. While intently occupied in my cabin writing, I heard a soft, sweet voice say, "Good morning, sir." The tone in which it was spoken—musical, lively, and varied—instantly told me that a lady of refinement was there greeting me. I was astonished. Could I be dreaming? Was it a mistake? No! I was wide awake, and writing. But had a thunder-clap sounded on my ear, though it was snowing at the time, I could not have been more surprised than I was at the sound of that voice. I raised my head. A lady was indeed before me. She was the Tookoolito I had so much desired to see. She spoke the English language fluently. Ebierbing, her husband, a fine and also intelligent-looking man, was introduced to me. From them I gleaned many interesting particulars of their visit to England, where they had seen the Queen and Prince Albert.'

Hall also states in his journal that Too-

koolito had wonderfully improved the natives around her, teaching them to be clean, and showing the women how to knit. This convinced him that these poor neglected creatures were willing to learn. Ebierbing and Tookoolito were faithful to Hall. They helped him in his travels north, and then went back with him to the United States, and started again with him in the Polaris expedition.

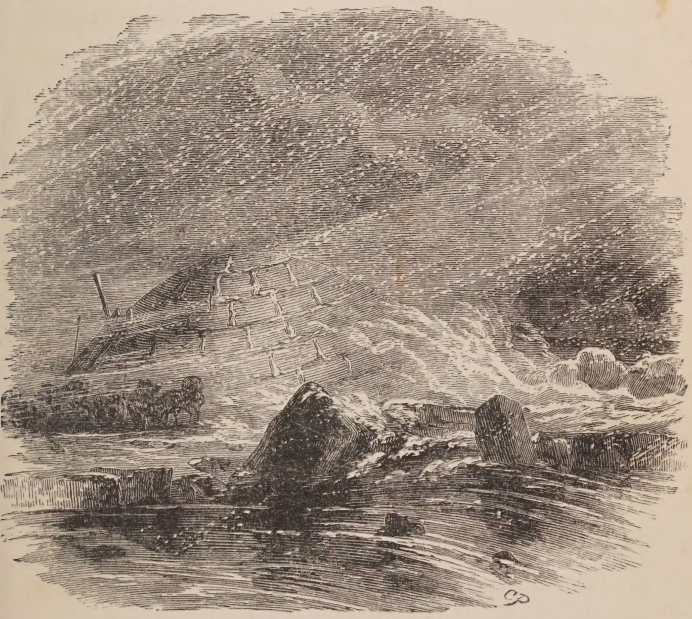
About the middle of November the George Henry was safely frozen up, and in all directions the harbour and bay were completely frozen over. There was no fear, however, of a tame and monotonous life. The first excitement was the shout of 'A bear!' and soon Hall was off in hot pursuit, with many from the ship and the dogs. It was a successful hunt in the end, and Hall's gun gave the last decisive shot. A bear is a most valuable prize to the Esquimaux, and his flesh forms precious food.

The ice being firm and the ship in safe quarters, Hall determined to begin his pro-

jected expeditions inland. On January 10th, 1861, he started off, when the temperature was 62° below freezing-point. Ebierbing, Tookoolito, and another Esquimaux, named Koodloo, formed the party, with a sledge and team of ten dogs, carrying food, clothing, oil for lamp, etc. All went merrily the first day, and when night drew near Hall enjoyed the new experience of making a house of snow, of the kind which the natives call an 'igloo.' Tookoolito proved invaluable for cooking, and was soon busy lighting the lamp, over which a kettle of snow was melted to make water for the coffee and soup. After a good night's rest all were up and off the next day, but they only went five miles on the way to their destination, viz., Cornelius Grinnell Bay.

A storm overtook them that night in the second igloo which they had made, and the party was detained two nights and a day in great peril. They were in greater danger because the igloo was built not on the land, but on the ice of the frozen sea. At last the

case grew desperate, for the ice began to break and water to show. 'In the evening,' writes Hall, 'the gale abated, and by 10 p.m.



ICE-BOUND ON A FLOE.

it was calm, but the heavy sea kept the ice creaking, screaming, and thundering as it actually danced to and fro. It was to me

a new and fearful sight. When I retired to bed I lay down with strange thoughts in my mind, but with the conviction that the same protecting Hand would watch over me there as elsewhere.' They were able to leave their dangerous retreat the next morning, though with very great difficulty. The dogs were by this time nearly starved, as nothing could be spared for them from the tiny stock of food left.

On the fourth night all arrived in a very worn-out condition on land overlooking Cornelius Grinnell Bay. They also found some Esquimaux who had gone on before and whom they were expecting to meet. After this meeting for a time food was more plentiful, as one of the natives, Ngarng by name, had caught a fine seal, and from its blubber oil was obtained for the lamp. Having used up all their oil, Hall's party had been suffering from thirst, as no snow could be melted for water without heat. For many days the two parties remained united, having a better chance of success in search of seals; but

their efforts were in vain, and at length starvation stared them in the face.

Have the boys and girls who read this narrative ever thought of the strange meals the Esquimaux eat from day to day? Let us attempt to picture their life when they are in the greatest luxury and comfort. What seems most necessary to us they never see, viz., a loaf of bread, for there can be no bread where no corn will grow. In the far distant North there is far too much snow and ice to grow wheat or vegetables of any kind. Then again there are no bright, green meadows where cows and sheep can feed; therefore there is no nice milk, nor any of the meat such as we see at dinner-time. Their greatest dainty is meat we should not care to touch, viz., seals' flesh and blubber, and sometimes they eat even the skin.

But, in spite of what Englishmen would consider privations, the Esquimaux manage to enjoy life in their own way; but on the expedition which we are now describing they were in a sad plight, and so near starvation

that Hall was forced to eat whale-skin. He grew so weak that he could scarcely drag himself about, and rapidly lost flesh. The case grew so desperate that Ebierbing had to return the whole way back to the George Henry, which difficult journey took many days. Ngarng, a patient Esquimaux, returned to the igloo sadly disappointed during this anxious time, having waited over a seal hole for *two whole days and one night;* but he only remarked, 'Away I go to-morrow morning again.'

The patience of the Innuits in hunting is wonderful. As soon as a native has discovered a seal hole by the help of his dog, he sits there quietly waiting by the hole till the seal shall see fit to pop his head up out of the hole to get a breath of air. When the seal does this he makes a well-known sound of puffing, which is very welcome to the weary watcher. Sometimes the seal gets away before the hunter can capture him, as in Ngarng's case, but when he can spear him and secure the prize there is great joy, espe-

cially when the people are so near starvation as Hall and his company just at this time were.

Day after day passed, and still no seal was caught. Fifteen days after Hall had left the ship, he went to look again if there was any sign of Ebierbing returning from the George Henry with the precious sledge-load. This time he was seen in the far distance. He arrived much worn-out with a very fine seal which he had himself caught that morning. We can imagine how quickly the news spread to the other two igloos, and soon all were ready for the feast.

The blubber of the seal is most valuable, for it is not only food, but without it the Esquimaux can have no light for lamps, or fire to cook by. Hall says it is simply amazing to see the enormous quantity these Esquimaux can eat at a time, and even after such privation they give no thought to saving food for the time they may want it again. However, though they are improvident they are wonderfully kind to each

other, and will give away their food to any hungry visitor as long as they have any.

After all these events Captain Hall determined to return to the George Henry from his northern home, having spent forty-two nights in the igloos, living among the natives, and seeing very much of the actual primitive life. Though warmly welcomed by the crew of his ships, Hall did not take kindly to his comforts again. He says, 'The first night (Feb. 21, 1861) on board the ship, after forty-three days away in an igloo, was a sleepless one, not from any want of comfort, but in consequence of the superabundance of it.'

CHAPTER IV.

WINTER HARDSHIPS.

In the next month (March, 1861) of the same spring the first reindeer was killed, mainly by the help of the wonderful sagacity of Hall's clever Greenland dog, Barbekark.

In describing the hunt, Hall says, 'On and on went Barbekark, straight for a spot that brought him close to the deer. The latter immediately changed their course, and so did Barbekark, hot in pursuit after them. Thus it continued for nearly two hours; first this way and then that; now in a circle, then zigzag. For a while nothing was thought of the affair, save an expression of regret that the dogs would not be able to find their way home, so far had they been

led by the enticing game. A little before noon Barbekark was seen coming back, and presently he came on board, with blood around his mouth and over his body. He kept whining and going first to one and then another, as if asking them to do something he wanted; but he failed to convey his meaning to anybody. Presently one of the men, called Spitles, went off to the wreck of the Rescue, and Barbekark followed. Seeing that Spitles went no farther, the dog bounded off to the north-west, and Spitles concluded that it was really possible that Barbekark had killed the deer. He returned to the ship, and a party went off to see about it. About three miles from the ship they found Barbekark and the other Greenland dogs seated upon their haunches around the deer, lying dead before them. On examination, its throat was shown to be cut with Barbekark's teeth as effectually as if it had been done with a knife.'

The reindeer is naturally much prized as a very dainty morsel, and its skin forms cloth-

ing. The winter dress of the Innuits is of reindeer skin, and the summer dress of seal-skin. The jacket is made round, with no fastening, but slips on over the head, is close-fitting but not tight.

The women's jackets have a long tail to them, and these are often much trimmed, perhaps with a fringe of beads, or bowls of Britannia metal, tea and table-spoons, on the flap hanging in front. The women think they improve their coats by adorning them with lead shot and coins of copper, and even brass bells. What a jingle and clatter they must make as they run about!

The full winter dress for the feet is, first, long reindeer fur stockings, the warm part next the skin; second, socks of eider-duck skin, with the feathers inside; third, socks of sealskin, with the fur outside; fourth, kummings or native boots with legs of tuktoo, the fur outside, and the soles of ookgook.

With all this wrapping up, they certainly ought to be, and deserve to be, warm; and

they need it, for here in England our very coldest day can give us but a faint idea of the intensity of those bitter, dark winter days and nights through which they have to live.

The real perils of the cold are shown by the sad end of one of the ship's crew in this expedition. John Brown, with others, started out for the Innuit settlement at Frobisher Bay, intending to trade there for walrus tusks and meat. All went well, till the return journey, when Brown was in such a great hurry to get back to the ship that nothing would induce him to wait for the rest of the party; who, in due time, reached the George Henry safely. Great was the distress of the crew when they found that their companion had not arrived before them. Hall at once volunteered to go in search of the missing man, and accompanied by ten men he set out.

At first they ran, so eager were they to rescue the poor fellow who by this time might be frozen with the cold. Their

first object was to discover his track, but, alas! as night came on, snow fell and altogether hid all traces. It was a weary hunt; the men grew tired and exhausted, and worse still, sick at heart with fears. At length, after many hours, they found their comrade, or rather his body, for he was quite dead—frozen to death. No doubt he had lain down, unable to walk a step further, and sleep in such cases is always fatal. When the brave searchers found that their efforts to save him were thus rendered fruitless, Captain Hall decided that it was best to make his grave upon the ice, and a solemn scene it must have been. 'We concluded to make his grave ashore, at the base of a noble mountain bluff or headland, that would stand for ever as the monument of the deceased. But it was soon found that not a stone could be moved. We then decided to make his grave upon the ice, on the very spot where he died, covering his form with the unspotted ice and snow that lay in profusion around. This sad duty was per-

formed with weeping hearts.' After this last sad duty was done they returned the ten miles to the George Henry as speedily as possible.

CHAPTER V.

SUMMER EXPLORATIONS.

ABOUT this time Captain Hall was seized with a desire to go in search of Frobisher's Land. This great explorer, with his fleet, visited the Far North as far back as the year 1576. The Innuits talked so much of wood having been found long ago on a perfectly barren island, that Hall soon connected the idea with Frobisher. He also gained some curious information from the natives; but as they have no knowledge of writing, accurate accounts are difficult to obtain; as it is handed on from generation to generation, the son's description may differ much from the father's, and thus the whole story may be greatly altered. Still, Hall gathered from these people that 'many years

ago the vessels of white men visited Frobisher's Bay three successive years: first, in two vessels; second, in three vessels; third, in many vessels. An old Esquimaux woman, named Ookijoxy Ninoo, told Hall that she had often seen wood, chips, coal and bricks, and large pieces of very heavy stone on the island of Niountelik. Hall chatted the matter over with Tookoolito, who suggested that probably these heavy stones were really iron. The real object of Hall's expedition to the Far North was to discover Sir John Franklin's remains, and he became hopeful when he found how well Frobisher's visits of nearly three hundred years ago were remembered, and therefore how easy it ought to be to find traces of Franklin's expedition of only sixteen years before.

All this time the George Henry was busy preparing to go elsewhere for whale-fishing. Hall, therefore, in May, 1861, decided to make a sledge exploring trip up the Bay of Frobisher until August, when he would start for King William's Land. He had many

strange experiences. On his return from Alden Mountain there was some very difficult and tiring walking to be done ; the snow crust continually gave way, and down he and his companions would go as deep as their waists. This was not only very unpleasant, but it rendered their progress very slow. They little thought how soon the scene would change. Suddenly, though after many hours' journeying, they came upon a beautiful grassy plain, without any snow whatever. How startling was the contrast to see green grass once more, after looking for nearly a year upon nothing but wild, grim rocks, ice and snow !

The interior of these Arctic regions Captain Hall found very level, with large herds of reindeer. Soon after this Hall was gladdened by finding a brick, which the Innuits had thought was a stone. This really proved to be undoubtedly a Frobisher relic. At another time bright but false hopes were raised when a party of Sekoselar Innuits spoke of *some white people dying* at Sekoselar.

Until Captain Hall's return to the United States he believed this report had something to do with Franklin, but there found that it must have been the British steamer Kitty, which was crushed in the ice of Hudson's Strait in 1859, the crew escaping in boats.

These people of Sekoselar are quite a distinct band of Esquimaux, with a slow, drawling way of speaking ; a finer race of people than the others, but less open to new ideas ; meeting, if possible, fewer strangers, and considering any food but their own barbarous.

One would have thought that after sharing in this savage life so long, and having travelled so far, Hall would have been content to return to America. He writes in his diary at this time, 'One year ago the George Henry sailed from New London. It seems to me a short year, though spent in regions that to many civilized men would be repulsive, and would appear unqualified desolation. Still, I like this country—not as a place to spend all my life, if it be one of fourscore and

ten years, but for *work* to be continued three or five years.' But he had made up his mind to visit what is known as the Dreaded Land. These islands are beyond Bear Sound, extending eastward between the waters of Frobisher Bay and Field Bay. The name of this land is due to Innuit superstition. Accounts have been handed on from generation to generation, that long ago many Innuits were on these islands, and at one time were nearly all out on the ice, when it separated from the land and carried them all out to sea, and they were never seen or heard of again. In consequence of this tradition no Innuit can be induced to live there, or even visit those parts.

Hall, however, was determined to go, and had it not been for his faithful Ebierbing's friendship and devotion he would have had the greatest possible difficulty in inducing any native to accompany him. Ebierbing had been to England, and civilization had enlightened him, and though he would much rather not have gone on this expedition, still

he had faith in his leader, and was willing to help him in every possible way. By Ebierbing's persuasion, Koodloo was induced to go out too, but very reluctantly did he start.

This trio left the George Henry in Rescue Harbour, and set out in a sledge drawn by six dogs. They were not long in reaching the Dreaded Land, though travelling was rough and difficult. A great obstacle to Hall was the number of seals they met. Now, good as an Innuit may be, nothing will induce him to move on if there is any good sport to be had. Both Ebierbing and Koodloo were good seal hunters, and as these islands were so lonely and forsaken by man, animal life had long flourished undisturbed here. Unlike the former trip, there was no fear or thought of a seal famine. They abounded in every direction. The two Innuits were crazy with delight, and overjoyed with the number of seals they captured. Their great success was almost sufficient to make them content with this unknown land.

There were also plenty of ducks, and one day there was a most exciting bear hunt. Hall was quietly making coffee in the little camp, when he heard the crack of a rifle. He did not think much of it at the time, but some hours later the two Esquimaux returned with the glad news that, in addition to one of the largest-sized seals, a bear had been killed. 'Ebierbing told me that they went over to the mountain island, where he first espied the bear, and saw the brute lying down. On their approach he sprang up and darted away. Three of the dogs were immediately let loose by cutting the traces with which they were harnessed to the sledge. After these had started the remaining dogs were cast adrift, and assisted in bringing the brute to bay. They barked, bit, struggled and fought bravely, the bear doing his best to defend himself. This continued half an hour, when Ebierbing, getting as favourable an opportunity as he desired, sent the messenger of death to the bear's heart.' This was a valuable prize, for he was very fat.

The beauty of these islands is very great. One of them Hall named Sylvia, and from its highest part could be seen the Lupton Channel, which never freezes over, because of the fast-running tides.

The little party seem to have had beautiful weather the first part of the time, but on reaching Cape Daly the wind was strongly against their sledge-driving. They pushed on to Cape Hayes, the most northerly point of Hudson's Island, on again to Hall's Island (so named by Frobisher in the 1576 expedition), where they climbed a mountain and had a splendid view. The goal of Hall's ambition in this trip, however, was to reach the 'North Foreland' of Frobisher. This wild headland greatly pleased him. He made every possible observation along the whole route. They had left the ship on June 5th, it was now June 12th, and Hall would fain have lingered, but the Innuits, in spite of the splendid sport and plentiful animal life around them, were restless and longing to get away from this beautiful but 'Dreaded Land.'

The return journey was difficult and dangerous by reason of a gale and thick mist on the ice; however, they safely reached the George Henry again June 15th.

CHAPTER VI.

A SECOND WINTER ON THE ICE.

THE following month there was great rejoicing on board, for on July 17th the ship broke free from her eight months' imprisonment. The summer passed uneventfully for exploring purposes. The George Henry left Rescue Harbour to cruise for whales, while Hall decided to make boat excursions, and live entirely among the Innuits. He made his head-quarters with his faithful Ebierbing and Tookoolito, until he went off on a boat excursion, eager to discover more Frobisher relics. The great disappointment of that year to him was having to abandon his voyage to King William's Land, and his next hope was that the George Henry might return before winter to the United States.

But before that could be decided, came the far more important question, would he and his Innuit party be able to return and find the ship after their long summer rambles and wonderful experiences? Not the least remarkable of these was the finding of some iron relics at Kodlunarn, about which Hall writes: 'Now it will be known throughout all the enlightened nations of the earth where Frobisher *did* attempt to establish the colony which Queen Elizabeth sent here in 1578.' They were found on the island of Niountelik, and this is Hall's account:—

'I was several fathoms in advance of Koo-ou-le-arng (an Esquimaux woman who was acting as guide), hastening on, being desirous to make as extended a search as the brief remaining daylight would allow, when, lifting my eyes from the ground near me, I discovered, a considerable distance ahead, an object of unusual appearance. But a second look satisfied me that what I saw were simply stones scattered about and covered with black moss. I continued my

course, keeping as near the coast as possible. I was now nearing the spot where I had

DISCOVERY OF FROBISHER RELICS.

first descried the black object. It again met my view. On casting my eyes all around,

seeing and feeling the character of the relics before and under me, I felt as—I cannot tell what my feelings were. What I saw before me was the *sea-coal* of Frobisher's expedition of 1578, left here near three centuries ago!'

On a later visit to the same place, Hall found an excavation, probably the beginning of one of Frobisher's mines, the ruins of a house, and fragments of tiles, glass and pottery. On the mainland he found 'a relic of three centuries! Iron—time-eaten, with ragged teeth! This iron, weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds, was on the top of a granite rock. My heart was a happy one in finding this iron, brought here only eighty-six years after the discovery of America by Columbus.'

On September 26th, 1861, the boat reached the old whaling depôt, where Hall soon hoped to meet his ship once more; and on the following night Hall again stepped on board the George Henry, welcomed alike by captain and crew. He found that all had

gone well with them, except that they had not secured a single whale during their absence of fifty days.

Hall's first business was to visit his 'adopted children,' as he called Ebierbing and Tookoolito, whose tupics, or summer tents, were near the harbour in Field Bay, where the ship lay anchored. One cannot wonder at his affection for this couple, when we remember that they had promised to leave their home and friends, to return south with him, in order to assist him in any future Arctic expedition.

Captain Budington and all hands had decided to set sail homewards on October 20th ; but within a few hours of that day the alarm was raised of 'Ice!' As Hall writes : 'At present it is thought that we are imprisoned in Field Bay for the winter! Solid pack ice in Davis's Strait has been seen today.'

It proved too true, and, to the intense disappointment of all the men, the George Henry was doomed to another nine months'

imprisonment. This was a serious matter in some ways. The capture of several whales had removed the difficulty of fuel and light, but food was not plentiful, and at once the crew had to live on *two* instead of *three* meals a day. The winter proved a trying one, chiefly on account of the great scarcity of food, no seals being captured. Naturally enough, Hall was not content to remain quietly on board, but went off exploring in various directions.

The ship was frozen up in October. Early in the following January of 1862 the crew divided themselves among the Innuits, trying the native life from necessity rather than choice, as the provisions on board were very scant and precious. The men did not stay away long at a time, and certainly white men cannot endure privation as the Esquimaux do.

Hall's last exploring expedition began on the 1st of April, 1862. He had plenty of time, as there was no hope of a release from the ice before July. They started, a merry

party of nine, in a sledge drawn by a splendid team of nineteen dogs ; and during this trip there were many exciting events. Among these were a walrus hunt and capture, and a visit to Grinnell Glacier. On the night of his seventeenth encampment they had a skirmish with a pack of hungry wolves, who went off disappointed of their supper and frightened by the cracking of the guns. Then they met with a polar bear and cub. The young bear Hall succeeded in killing, to the dismay of Koojesse and Sharky (his only companions at this part), and speedily they moved on from that neighbourhood, fearing that the mother bear, savage and revengeful, would return upon them in terrible strength.

In the middle of May they returned to the George Henry. Even after this, Hall made another short excursion to the Countess of Warwick's Sound, Mount Warwick, and other places which he had before visited. All through July anxiety became great as to how soon the ship would break away from

SHOOTING THE POLAR BEAR AND HER CUBS.

her ice-prison; but not until August 8th could Captain Budington tell his men the glad news that the ice of Field Bay was all broken up, and that they might safely start homewards. All set to work in earnest, and the following day, although there was no wind, the boats were manned, and she was soon towed down the bay, not before many farewells were said to the Innuits, who had been kind during the winter months. They again and again said '*ter-bou-e-tie*' (farewell).

On reaching Newfoundland they put into St. John's, and after staying there a few days, sailed for New London, which was reached September 13th, 1862, or two years and three and a half months after leaving it.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHARACTER AND HABITS OF THE ESQUIMAUX.

Captain Hall did not merely visit Esquimaux huts, but he lived months at a time in their midst, and for long years Ebierbing and Tookoolito were his companions. In this way he was able to get to know a great deal about their way of thinking and acting, their habits of life, their customs and religious beliefs.

They are simple-minded and, among themselves, honest. They are kind to one another, especially in the matter of food. In seasons of scarcity they share willingly and, even in times of the greatest hardships, if a seal is caught, all within reach are called to the feast. They are generally kindly disposed to one another, and are fond of games.

Captain Hall writes, 'The people are not naturally quarrelsome, and theft and murder are almost unknown. When a quarrel arises, the two parties keep aloof from each other, sometimes for a long time. Sometimes, however, a mutual and elderly friend arranges the matter, and then a quiet talk often shows that the quarrel—with them as with us—was the result of an entire misunderstanding of words reported by gossiping tongues.'

He states their views on religious matters thus: 'There is one Supreme Being called by them Ang-u-ta, who created the earth, the sea, and heavenly bodies. There is also a secondary divinity, a woman, daughter of Ang-u-ta, called Sid-ne; she is supposed to have made all things having life, animal and vegetable. She is really more important to the people, they pray more to her, and they imagine she has all protecting power over them.'

The Innuits believe in a heaven and a hell, though their notions as to what is to

constitute their happiness or misery hereafter are varied as one meets with different communities. Tookoolito says, 'My people think this way: Heaven, Koodleparmiung, is upward! Everybody happy there. All the time light, no snow, no ice, no storm, always pleasant, no trouble, never tired; sing and play all the time, all this to continue without end. Hell is downward. Always dark there, no sun, trouble there continually, snow flying all the time, terrible storm, cold, very cold, and a great deal of ice there. All who go there must always remain.'

All Innuits who have been good go to Koodleparmiung, that is, who have been kind to the poor and the hungry, all who have been happy while living on this earth. All Innuits who have been bad, that is, unkind to one another, will go to Adleparmeun. If one Innuit kills another because he is angry with him, he will surely go.

Perhaps the saddest part in their belief is obedience to the An-ge-ko, a person who by clever management has made his com-

panions believe him to have power from the gods. When there is sickness the Innuits send for the An-ge-ko, who at once wants payment for his services. As they have no money, he usually gets something he likes very much, generally something valuable. We may be sure the more the people believe in him the more they will give, and then the more benefit will be given to the sick one. The An-ge-ko then sits and sings, or rather howls, to the sufferer, very often till he dies, never giving any comfort or relief, as medicine is quite unknown to them. Hall says it was one of the saddest sights to see these poor misguided people wrapped up in their ignorance and superstition, and yet be unable to teach them anything of a Saviour's love until he could speak in their language. They have truthful, unselfish natures. How glorious it would be to send out to them some brave God-fearing men, who could give time to learning their language, and speak to them of God's unselfish, wonderful love in sending His own loved Son

into the world to die for these poor Innuits ! With this precious new faith, how soon they would long for better things, and great good might be done in winning souls for Christ !

Noble Christian men and women have toiled hard and suffered much to be able to tell the Esquimaux of the love of Jesus. Something has been done in the past; but much yet remains to be done before the good tidings of salvation in and through Jesus only shall have been preached to all.

WATCHING FOR A SEAL. [*See p.* 34.

PART II.

THE EXPEDITION IN THE POLARIS.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATIONS.

Captain Hall resumed his life among the Esquimaux in 1864, and spent five years more in the Arctic regions. In fact, his determination was that his whole life and energy should be given to the discovery of the North Pole.

No full account exists, except in Hall's unpublished journals, of his second stay among the natives. But in the month of January, 1870, Captain Hall visited the President of the United States, at Washington, and from him received much kindness.

He lectured before a most influential as-

sembly, and gave much fresh information about the Arctic regions and life there. The presence of his faithful Esquimaux friends, Ebierbing and his wife Tookoolito, with their little child, added greatly to the interest and enthusiasm of the meeting.

The following summer a Bill was passed in the American Senate authorizing the President of the United States to send out one or more expeditions toward the North Pole. Money to the amount of £10,000 also was granted for the same purpose out of the Treasury. Very soon after this Captain Hall received the appointment to command the new expedition, and a suitable vessel was chosen. A strong ship was needed for the perils of such a voyage, and a steamship called the Periwinkle was chosen. She was strengthened in every way that skill and experience could suggest, and prepared for her new work. Everything also that could be thought of was done for the comfort and safety of her crew.

The new commander soon re-named the

Periwinkle, and henceforth she will be known in history as the Polaris. Captain Hall not only longed to reach the North Pole for purposes of scientific discovery that would prove valuable to the whole world, but he hoped to find out vast whaling-grounds on the way north, and thus open up valuable fields for American enterprise and commerce, and largely increase the supply of oil from the Arctic regions.

Hall received his final instructions from Mr. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, and the crew were carefully chosen ; eight officers, three scientific men, and fourteen sailors, beside two interpreters, the trusty Esquimaux now better known as Joe and Hannah.

CHAPTER II.

THE START.

THE Polaris sailed from New London on July 3rd, 1871. Religious services had been held on board before leaving, and earnest prayers were offered up to God that He would bring the voyagers safely back to their homes and dear ones again.

On July 27th the Polaris cast anchor in Fiskernaes Harbour, on the coast of Greenland. There Dr. Bessels, the head of the scientific staff, with others, visited the Esquimaux settlement Lichtenfels under Moravian missionaries, and were kindly received. Captain Hall was quite at home at the next stopping-place, Holsteinborg, having pleasant recollections of his previous visit in 1860. At this place the men of the Polaris were

delighted to meet with a Swedish scientific expedition returning south. Although it had not gone far into the north, still the crew brought good accounts of a favourable summer for Arctic sailing, and of a water unusually free from ice.

Steaming on to North Greenland, Godhaven was next reached. Here on the Sunday Captain Hall went to the church, and was rejoiced to find it so neat, and the congregation, about thirty in number, so attentive. At this place further supplies were taken on board, and the Congress, a store-ship, which had been sent on from America, arrived, bringing coals and stores, and loading the Polaris to her utmost capacity. After all was done, and both ships were ready to separate, some of the partings were hard, as relatives were left behind on the Polaris, and last letters were sent off to friends at home.

There was yet some room left in the crowded vessel; this was taken up by more natives, who were wanted for service in the

Far North. One in particular, Hans Hendricks, who had been a member of Dr. Kane's polar expedition many years before, was needed. At Godhaven Captain Hall learned that this man would be found somewhere near Upernavik, a distance of 225 miles further north, and there he was found, and consented to go as dog driver and servant, if allowed to take his wife and three children. This was a rather serious addition, as one Esquimaux woman was already on board. However, Hans was too valuable a man to lose, and the commander consented. Many dogs had of course been secured for sledging, and none were so able to feed and manage these as the natives.

On leaving the settlement of Tessi-Ussak the Polaris left the civilized world on her unknown and perilous voyage, having on board no less than thirty-three souls, including the six Esquimaux. This was in the month of August, and the captain was eager to press forward, as the season was fast passing, and he trusted to make snug winter quarters

as far north as possible, to be ready for the next summer, which he trusted would bring the fulfilment of many hopes concerning the North Pole.

All went well after the actual start. Ice was soon encountered, and plenty of icebergs, but nothing to hinder their progress. The first excitement was caused by some walruses. These creatures were seen together in large numbers on a piece of floe ice. Joe tried his skill at shooting, but only startled them, and they all disappeared into the water.

On August 27th the ship was obliged to stop for the first time, on account of the ice, but that difficulty by great care and long ice experience was overcome, and open water was again reached.

On nearing the mountains of Grinnell Land, according to the journal kept, the scene was lovely: 'During the first morning watch, the sun, hitherto hidden by the mountains, suddenly shone out, causing a universal exclamation of wonder and delight. The line of reflected light was singularly brilliant

where it crossed the patches of water, and it was rendered iridescent where it fell on the edges of the hummocks of the fractured ice, or on the pack itself.'

The contrast between the snows of the hills and the dark hues of the water in shadow, was also a striking feature of the scene. The sky was cloudless and the atmosphere pleasant. It is not surprising that the little company of explorers derived encouragement from these bright and cheering influences.

Soon after this a bay was explored with a view to winter quarters, but the water was not deep enough, and after this delay the Polaris steamed on again, overcoming many difficulties with ice, water currents, and much fog. All along this route Captain Hall faithfully carried out the injunctions given him by the United States Government, which were, 'To keep the Government as well informed as possible of your progress, you will, after passing Cape Dudley Digges, throw overboard daily, as open water or

drifting ice may permit, a bottle or small copper cylinder closely sealed, containing a paper, stating date, position, and such other facts as you may deem interesting.' This was frequently done.

In the Far North, which the ship had now reached, much care and experience were needed; for the navigation among the ice was perilous indeed, but the commander had good reason for self-congratulation upon his selection of officers; and the crew, by their activity and promptness, performed their part faithfully. Every effort was made to overcome the difficulties, and the word was always 'Onward!'

During the early hours of August 30th, the ship was kept moving toward the north; immense ice-fields were passed, increasing, with the latitude, in size and number. At 6 a.m. the highest point was reached. The ice then became so compact that it was impossible to force the vessel through. So far as the eye could penetrate the fog, there was no open space to the north; even if there

had been, there was no passage leading to it. The Polaris had reached the northern limit of her voyage. Hermann Siemens, whose record of the state of the ice at that time is the only one preserved, says, 'We saw firm ice from one coast to the other.'

Feeling a pride in what the ship had already done, Captain Hall was ambitious to accomplish still more, and was grieved when he found himself in front of an impassable barrier. He enjoyed the satisfactory reflection, however, that everything had been done that was possible.

CHAPTER III.

WINTER QUARTERS.

As it was not possible to get farther north, so it was impossible to keep the ship from drifting south with the current; thus the highest point she reached was afterwards discovered to have been 82° 26′ North latitude. At this time the all-important matter to be decided upon was where safe winter quarters could be found. The captain's great desire was, if possible, to reach the western coast before going into winter quarters, so as to be the better prepared for the proposed sledge journeys north the following spring. However, the Polaris soon became so much surrounded by ice, that grave fears were felt lest the ship might be carried south, or, far worse, be

destroyed altogether. The men therefore worked very hard at this time, carrying stores from the ship on to the floe for safety, fearing the worst. It was a dreary outlook, and snow fell fast all around.

It was now early in September, and the Arctic winter not far distant. At the service on Sunday morning, September 3rd, at 11 a.m., all hands being present, Captain Hall said the vessel had reached latitude 82° 26′ North, a position higher than that attained by any other ship; that they had done all they could, and had only given in to a force that it was impossible to resist; that if it were God's will that the vessel should continue to drift during the winter, they still might be proud of the success already accomplished; that even if nothing more were done, he felt amply repaid for all his labours; and that they might all be proud to return to their country with such a record as they had already made. . . . He assured them that they had no reason for doubting the final accomplishment of their ardently desired ob-

ject—reaching the Pole. In conclusion, he urged upon them all to give the closest attention to the religious services in which they were about to engage, as at that particular time they all needed the assistance of a Higher Power.

Immediately upon the close of these remarks, Divine service was conducted by Mr. Bryan. Hermann Siemens thus closes the record of the day: 'Ship and crew appear to be a ready prey to the ice. But there is a God, who aids and saves from death; to Him I trust between these icebergs, although I know that I do not deserve all the good He grants me.'

After this the weather cleared up, and with a good deal of difficulty, after all the stores had been again taken on board from the floe, the ship was cleared of the ice in a channel of open water, and she quickly steamed in toward the eastern coast and not far from land. She was at last safely anchored at the south end of Robeson Strait, to the intense relief of many weary, anxious

men. Although this was not a very comfortable winter harbour, it was thought prudent to remain there, and to anchor inshore of a very large iceberg, which Captain Hall named Providence Berg. Much store from the ship was carried to land for safety, so that should evil befal the ship the crew would be safe at any rate for a time.

Captain Hall's first object was to find out something of the country near by, and he started on an exploring journey. After much trouble, one of the highest points of the nearer mountains was reached, where a good view was gained. Traces of summer dwellings, where Esquimaux had lived, were also seen. Nothing of importance happened in this little expedition. They were all tired out with the steep climb, and glad to get back to the ship.

The Sunday after, service was held as usual, when Captain Hall, in thoroughly good spirits concerning the progress which had been made, said, 'that in humble recognition of the Divine Hand by which the expedition

had been guided, he had resolved to name this harbour "Thank-God Harbour."'

Even in this comparatively safe resting-place, much anxiety was felt about the middle of September, as the ice appeared to be breaking up, and all had to be in readiness, fearing the Polaris might be forced from her anchorage. However, all passed off well.

Preparations had now to be made for winter: the days were distinctly shorter, and the cold much more intense. Everything possible on the ship was done to increase the general comfort.

Three of the crew about this time started on an exploring expedition—Bryan, Meyer, and Manch,—and had a most trying journey. Two of them were in suitable Esquimaux foot-gear, but Manch laboured much in a pair of cow-hide boots. They started in good spirits, but seemed unable to make progress; and though they walked and walked over most dreary country, one mountain in particular seemed to haunt them. They were eager to pass it and get beyond, but it was

ever present, and most depressing was the effect! They had some bad falls into cracks, and sometimes into deep water, so that there was much risk in their fast-freezing clothes. Manch was in the worst plight, and was quite unable to keep up with the others. Eager though they all were to reach the ship once more, their clothes were frozen solid and their hands held in mittens of solid ice. On nearing the shore by the ship, Bryan and Meyer determined to push on, knowing that Manch, although exhausted, was safe, and that assistance could better be given him by those in the ship. Some of the men started at once, and soon found poor Manch, perfectly exhausted and scarcely conscious. When warm in bed he caused much amusement to those anxiously watching for returning strength, by speaking slowly and saying, 'Captain—travelling—in—this—country—is—very—discouraging!' A hearty laugh followed, which did them not a little good.

Soon after another party started out, this

time in search of musk-oxen, since fresh meat was desirable for the health of the crew. The little party were absent about a week, and they were rewarded by killing and bringing home the only musk-ox they saw. It was a fat, substantial animal, and weighed 369 lbs. Captain Hall learned from these men that although the interior was hopeful, in having large flat plains, good for travelling, toward the unknown North, unfortunately, the snow was not deep enough to carry sledges. This was a disappointment, as the captain was eager to explore and discover if possible a good route to the North before the winter set in. Yet this bad news did not discourage the leader. He pushed forward all the preparations with great zeal, and a good fall of snow about this time raised his hopes for the sledge-travelling.

At this time also the ice brought great pressure to bear on the ship. Strong spring tides and a gale brought the ice pack in against the berg. The way in which the

Polaris endured this pressure without injury showed how splendidly the ship had been strengthened for her special work. The cable was moved, and when all motion had ceased it was discovered that Providence Berg had been forced in toward the shore 100 yards, while the ship had moved 50 yards.

CHAPTER IV.

HALL'S LAST SLEDGE EXPEDITION.

THE life of this great Arctic explorer now grows intensely interesting. His days are nearly numbered, for this sledge expedition was to be his last undertaking, although none on board dreamt how near his end was. Almost to the last Captain Hall maintained his strong enthusiastic energy, and fired those around him with the desire and thirst for discovery. As a commander he was much respected, and a letter inserted here will show the true interest he took in his men, and the appreciation it called forth from the crew. A complaint had been made about the food, which, contrary to Captain Hall's wish, had been better for some than

others on board. This is the letter in response :—

'The men forward desire publicly to tender their thanks to Captain F. C. Hall for his late kindness; not, however, that we were suffering want, but for the fact that it manifests a disposition to treat us as reasonable men, possessing intelligence to appreciate respect and yield it only where merited; and he need never fear but that it will be our greatest pleasure to so live that he can implicitly rely on our service in any duty or emergency.'

Before Captain Hall's last journey, he left many orders for the ship concerning food, fuel, and such things. It was found that the supply of oil was not very large, and therefore must be carefully used. On October 10th, Captain Hall issued a letter to the crew, addressed to the officer left in charge, in these words :—

'Sir,—I am about to proceed on a sledge-journey, for the object of determining how far north the land extends on the east side

of the strait in which the Polaris is wintering, and also to prospect for a feasible inland route to the north-west, for next spring's sledging in my attempt to reach the North Pole (this route is to be adopted providing the ice of the strait should be found so hummocky that sledging over it would be impracticable); and, furthermore, to hunt musk cattle, believing and knowing as I do from experience, that all fresh meat for use of a ship's company situated as is that of the Polaris, should be secured before the long Arctic night closes upon us.'

Many were the instructions left, in the possibility of any accident befalling the ship by storm and drifting of the ice; and a more thorough and devoted captain could nowhere have been found. He started October 10th, 1871, accompanied only by Mr. Chester, Joe, and Hans. They were absent from the ship two weeks, and very eager was the crew to hear about all their experiences on their return. These were not very satisfactory. The weather was not good, and there were

only nine hours of daylight each day to work in. They made nine encampments, once narrowly escaping suffocation.

'The four had entered the snow-house for the night, and according to custom had securely fastened up the entrance with a large block of snow. They had neglected to make a hole for ventilation, and the igloo being very well built, was perfectly air-tight. The kerosene lamp and candle having gone out, an attempt was made to relight the latter, for Captain Hall to look up his reckonings; but the matches went out immediately upon being struck. Captain Hall's attention was called to this strange fact; and while trying to account for it he began to feel the effects of the deoxygenated air, and called out, "Kick down the door!" Joe at once obeyed.'

Only traces of musk cattle were found, to their great disappointment. They searched for coal also, in every direction, but without success. This would have been invaluable for the Polaris, if she could have gone farther

north; and many were the pieces picked up which much resembled coal, but on close examination only proved to be slate stone. A most elaborate cairn, with deposits of valuable information, was prepared and left at Cape Brevooet.

When the time appointed for the expedition had passed, all hope of getting further north was prevented by the moving ice in Robeson's Strait, and it was decided to turn homeward. The foggy weather had been much against the making of observations, and the damp proved very uncomfortable for them. Everything they had to wear had frozen stiff after being wet by the moisture from the fog; and not having sufficient fuel they could not be dried. One of Captain Hall's last entries in his diary was about this great discomfort. He wrote: 'We have to a certain extent adopted the plan of taking our smaller articles, such as mittens and stockings, to bed with us. By placing them inside our sleeping bags, and next to our bodies, they become partially dry by morn-

ing. When we unpack our sleeping gear, our sleeping bags have to be coaxed a long time before we can unroll them, they are so stiffly frozen. But these kinds of difficulties we do not mind much. So long as we can forward the service we are engaged in, so long will we laugh at such obstacles as those mentioned.'

They were delayed in returning to the ship by a severe gale, and the fogs made travelling treacherous. Not till the 24th could they see the Polaris, and this was indeed a glad sight.

On reaching the ship, Captain Hall seemed in bright spirits, and talked of starting in a couple of days for one more journey before the winter should set in. However, he was soon laid aside by illness. During the return journey he had complained, and had been unable to walk as usual, but reluctantly had kept on the sledge.

Before the commander had been many hours on the Polaris, the doctor pronounced that one of his sides was paralysed, and

that he had had an apoplectic fit. The following day he was somewhat better, but soon became worse, and, sad for all around him, his mind seemed to give way, and he would only take food from his faithful Esquimaux, Hannah. The ship was kept as quiet as possible.

Just before his death there were strong hopes of his recovery. He fully entered into all the plans, and seemed to understand everything in his old bright fashion. On the evening of November 6th another attack came on, and he was again dangerously ill. Through the night he got worse, and the next day he sank into insensibility, and so he remained till early on the morning of the 8th, when he quietly expired.

Thus died the brave Arctic traveller, full of his work to the end, the soul and life of the Polaris expedition.

The crew were in terrible trouble, and sorrowed deeply at losing their leader. There had grown up a deep, strong love between captain and men; and now it seemed as

though all their hope and joy had gone, and they were sadly depressed. The two Esquimaux who had followed their true friend were heart-broken. All felt that the leader and hero was taken from them.

It was fortunate indeed that the illness and death had taken place on the ship. And now came the last sad duty. The funeral was simple, but intensely solemn. The gloom of an Arctic November noon was so great that lanterns were necessary to light the sorrowful procession to the grave. Barren and icy were all the surroundings, but warm and loving hearts and hands laid the remains of their captain in their last resting-place.

The death of Captain Hall proved to be fatal to the main object of the expedition—to the fulfilment of that purpose for which he had qualified himself by many years of banishment from home—the attainment of the Pole if possible, or the absolute proof of its inaccessibility.

The ordinary routine of the ship was in

no way disturbed by the sad event just recorded. Captain Budington succeeded to the command, and Dr. Bessels continued as chief of the scientific department.

CHAPTER V.

WINTER HARDSHIPS.

A GREAT storm was the next event. It continued for several days with great strength, the wind reaching the velocity of forty-seven miles per hour; and after it reached fifty-seven miles per hour it could not further be measured. Several men went out from the ship, but returned with the greatest difficulty, and most of them were frost-bitten; even the dogs suffered so severely that the men, not able to rest for their distressing cries, had the poor creatures on deck, and protected them as well as they could. It was a most anxious time for all. The open sea was not far distant, and the ship, restless in her cradle of ice, soon began to feel the motion.

On November 21st a severe shock was felt, and it was found that the Polaris was adrift. She was driven up against Providence Berg, and then the perilous work came of trying to anchor the ship to the berg. This was no easy task in the darkness and blinding, bitter storm, but brave men volunteered, and accomplished the task safely.

But danger was not yet over: another gale was at hand, from the south-west, forcing in huge pieces of ice against Providence Berg with such terrific pressure that the berg was broken into two parts. Then a fresh danger came upon the ship: the Polaris was driven in towards the shore by the berg, and until the tide turned, and the berg grounded, great was the peril. Even after this there was fresh peril, since the ice pack, pressing so heavily on the outside of Providence Berg, threatened to turn it over and crush the ship. But, mercifully, just at that time the gale moderated. The crew by this time were nearly worn out by anxiety and long watching.

December came in calmly enough, and continued uneventful. Christmas and its festivities brought bustle and gladness, and the New Year was heartily welcomed by the ringing of the ship's bell.

Captain Budington proved to be a most kind and thoughtful commander, doing everything in his power to make the winter pass brightly and happily on board, caring for the men and their health. By the time spring returned, they were all found in good health, only with very white faces, due entirely to the long absence of the sun.

As early as January in the year of 1872, an excursion was made by two of the crew, but it only lasted four hours; and other little expeditions were made in the immediate neighbourhood. The work at the observatory all this time was very heavy. The meteorologist had for two months been taking observations during sixteen hours of each day; and now he had help, as it would not do for any one to be worn out with such an uncertain future ahead.

During February some splendid Aurora effects were visible. Most lovely they were, sometimes lasting all night. Thus one journal records: 'On the north-east, east, and south-east horizon were beams of luminous clouds. They soon accumulated, and formed an irregular arch due east, which slowly moved, as if driven in a southerly direction. Later on three distinct arches, one above another; at 4.30 p.m. more streamers. I might say they follow the twilight, showing their brilliancy right alongside, as if they would ask which one we liked best.' Another writing says: 'It was as if a regiment of troops retreated before an enemy closing in upon them.'

March came in with heavy gales; still all were thinking of the sledgings in the spring, and the Esquimaux on board were eager to begin seal-hunting. Active life and sunlight were felt to be indeed a boon after a somewhat tedious winter. By the time April had arrrived, Captain Budington had so far arranged his plans that he had decided to

send out two boats for exploring purposes. These were to be ready to start early in May, the one named U. S. Grant to be commanded by Mr. Chester, the second, the George M. Robeson, by Captain George E. Tyson; each boat to carry half a dozen experienced men.

Meanwhile, during April, there was a successful sledge expedition, and an encampment formed on Offley Island where the snow-house or igloo the men had made proved very comfortable, until some warm days came; then it melted so fast that the top had to be taken off and rebuilt.

From this resting-place some good exploring work was done, the men being sometimes absent from it as long as twenty-two hours.

After this Joe and Hans went hunting, and killed seven musk-oxen, one rabbit, and two ptarmigans.

Although plans had been made for the boats to start May 1st, the weather all through that month continued too cold, and the crew were much cast down at finding that the ice was as impenetrable as ever. Every-

thing on board was in readiness for the ship getting afloat once more, though there was a good deal of anxiety concerning her seaworthiness. The ice had played sad havoc, such as no ordinary ship could have endured. Here is a description of her condition :—

'I think it will be some trouble to keep the Polaris afloat when she comes down into the water again. Her sides are much open. Her main rail is broken in one place by the heavy pressure of the whole top-work of the vessel listing over so much and for so long a time. No ordinary vessel could bear such a wrenching.'

During the winter chats by the cabin stove the men had grown so enthusiastic about the comparative ease of reaching the actual North Pole by boats, that no obstacles were allowed to stand in the way. Never did a more hopeful party set out than Mr. Chester with his boat and crew, on June 8th, 1872; but they were soon doomed, alas! to bitter disappointment.

The day following the departure from the ship, the boat was lost, crushed to pieces by the ice, but, mercifully, no lives lost. Nothing daunted, Mr. Chester and his men started off again, on June 12th, this time in a canvas boat, singing merrily a song composed during the winter, 'We are going to the Pole.'

Captain Tyson and his boat-load had already started, and there was little time to be dull on board the ship, for soon a strong wind set in, and a broad sheet of water could be seen. If Providence Berg had got adrift, the Polaris would soon have been free; as it was, the remainder of the crew left on board set to work to saw the ship out of her icy cradle, and on June 26th she was once more afloat, but leaking badly.

The first little voyage she undertook was unsuccessful, and she returned to her old friend, Providence Berg. On starting again, Captain Budington was anxious to reach Newman's Bay, to pick up the boat parties. Eventually most of the men walked overland to join the Polaris.

The crew did not forget, before leaving this spot, to set up a head-board to the grave of their much-loved captain, and cut in very deep letters, on a piece of pine-wood, these words :—

In Memory of
CHARLES FRANCIS HALL,
Late Commander
U. S. Steamer Polaris, North Pole Expedition.
Died
Nov. 8th, 1871.—Aged 50 years.

'I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.'

CHAPTER VI.

LOSS OF THE POLARIS.

FROM this point all thought of progress to the Far North ceased. Hitherto all had been full of hope that something great might yet be accomplished, but August brought with it a complete change of plan. After careful looking into the coal supply, it was found that there was little store left, and therefore the ship must turn her face homeward as soon as any opening in the ice came.

Captain Budington writes : ‘ I have always been living in hopes that we should get farther north with the vessel ; but this season is so unfavourable, the ice being so

compact and close, that we may consider our return this year an impossibility. Since the return of the boat parties we have not had an opportunity to start north; and even if we had such an opportunity now, it would not be at all advisable without coal enough, to risk it with a vessel like ours at this advanced state of the season.'

About this time quite an event happened on board, viz., the arrival of a little Esquimaux boy. The men made a great deal of the baby, and he was named Charles Polaris Hendrick. It was quite wonderful what this child endured afterwards; hardships that would have killed almost any English boy did not seem to trouble the hardy little native very much.

It was with mingled feelings that officers and men steamed out from Thank-God Harbour in the month of August. It was like leaving home; and though the men longed for change and activity, yet not one of them felt satisfied with the condition of their ocean home. So many ice dangers lay

ahead, that all felt how sorely the brave ship must be tried.

The Polaris started most favourably, and for several hours made rapid progress, until an ice pack was met with, and then she was made fast to a large floe and drifted slowly with it. Passing Franklin Island, a huge landslide was noticed, and at this time great anxiety was felt on account of the increased leak; indeed, the gravity of the situation will be better understood by an extract from one of the journals preserved. It is under date of August 25th:—

'The ice is opening a few hundred yards from us, but so little that we cannot take advantage of it. The surrounding ice consists of heavy floes, between which it would not be advisable to force the ship; her fate would soon be sealed. Although our prospects of release are somewhat dreary-looking, nobody appears to be down-hearted, a fact which makes me conclude one thing, that they do not appreciate a winter in the pack, or that they are Arctic heroes, fit for such

expeditions. The officers are, of course, aware that ten chances to one we are lost if we should not be able to reach the land ; but they do well in not expressing their feelings, so as to keep up good spirits among the ship's company.'

Ice closed around them in every direction, and all preparations were made to abandon the ship if a nip should come, causing swift destruction. Their present condition was the reverse of cheering, tied up again to an ice floe. A house was made on the floe, and hunting began again.

All this time, for it was now October, the ship was rapidly drifting with the ice down Smith's Sound. The captain felt he could not be easy until the ice in which the Polaris lay had passed well through Smith's Sound, and had joined the Baffin's Bay pack ; but dangerous waters had to be crossed first, and danger was very near.

The ship was speeding along in the ice floe one dark stormy night, and the crew shuddered to see how fast the icebergs

around them were being passed, when suddenly the Polaris had the severest nip she had ever received. Her timbers trembled and cracked with loud reports. It was a cruel night of snow and storm, but the men worked for their lives, throwing everything they possibly could on to the ice, feeling the ship must soon break up. Everything was carried on to the ice for safety, including the precious journals and observations made by Captain Hall. The Esquimaux women and children took refuge on the ice, and soon two boats were lowered. Unfortunately the great floe itself was now cracked in several places, and men in every direction were trying to place things in the greatest safety, when, fearful to relate, the ship suddenly broke away from the ice and was carried out into the darkness! It was a terrible time for all. Those on board were horrified to think how many were left behind on different pieces of ice, just trembling between life and death; while those on the ship were scarcely safer.

The Polaris was thus suddenly bereft of nineteen of her crew! As it is impossible to follow the fate of the people on the ice at the same time as that of the ship, it will be better to return to them later, and first see how bravely the crew worked for their lives with the pumps, which alone could keep under the quantity of water pouring in through numerous leaks. Captain Budington found that thirteen of the crew were left to him, and brave fellows they proved themselves. They included the first and second mates and Dr. Emil Bessels, as well as the astronomer, Mr. Bryan; all the natives had been left behind on the floe. After the first horror of the situation was over, it became a desperate case of working for dear life. The engine fires were almost reached by the water when the pumping began; and after almost superhuman effort, steam was got up, and the steam pumps saved the ship. By this time the storm had ceased, and when daylight came there were lingering hopes that something might be seen of those left behind

on the ice. But no sign of them could be seen! They could but pray the Father of all to guard and protect them in their different perils.

The following day it was discovered that the land was near; and as coal was getting so scarce, it was determined to abandon the ship altogether. By means of steam and sail land was safely reached, and the Polaris grounded on the beach. After a night of some welcome rest and sleep, preparations were made for a temporary home on land by making use of everything which had been left on board, and also of the ship itself.

At first great excitement was caused by the sound of dogs barking. Fervent were the prayers that it might prove to be the other company from the ice-floe; and when two men were seen running, it can be imagined how bright were the hopes of a meeting with lost friends. Bitter was the disappointment when they were discovered to be Esquimaux. Captain Budington knew sufficient of the native language to be able to make himself

understood, and the men became very useful.

A house was soon built on the land, and the natives worked well in bringing stores from the ship. Having promises of presents, they worked willingly, and other Esquimaux soon joined them, and eager questions were asked as to whether any other white travellers had been seen. Many an anxious thought went forth (especially in time of storm) to those left unprotected on the ice, and many were the hopes that they might get to land by their boats.

By the time November had arrived, the natives had become almost too friendly, and went to and fro between the house and their settlements freely. This little party got through the winter wonderfully well, finding plenty of occupation; and hunting formed an amusement for all.

The wood from the Polaris suitable for boat-building was carefully preserved, and when April had come,—for it was now the year 1873,—Mr. Chester superintended the

building of the boats; and so much heart and good-will was thrown into the work that the little crafts were soon finished. The sails caused much amusement, being made of cotton sheets and linen toweling.

During that spring there were many severe gales, but the little party landed from the Polaris were greatly cheered by the Esquimaux tidings that each year ships were seen near Cape York; and better still, that some of the crews had landed.

Pleasant as was the companionship and help of the natives, at last they came in such numbers that the captain and his people often found it difficult to accommodate them, as they usually stayed a night or more; and their dirty habits made the surroundings both unhealthy and unpleasant.

However, their friendliness was not forgotten, and their assistance and ability in hunting were useful, although many of these poor creatures that winter were badly off for food. Polaris House became quite a place of refuge for them. Early one morn-

ing in April there was great disappointment because two hares which had been caught were missing from the larder. The natives who had slept that night in the house innocently said that they had eaten them *raw*, and that they were very good!

Various little sledge expeditions were set on foot. Mr. Bryan started on one in May, and reached Rensselaer Harbour, and there found traces of which he was in search, viz., Dr. Kane's observatory; also the graves of two other Arctic explorers. After finding these relics, satisfactory in one way, in assuring him of his exact locality, yet very depressing in themselves, Mr. Bryan determined to return; but having only the dogs for companions, the sledge having already started, Mr. Bryan had a walk of sixty miles. He became too exhausted at last to carry even a bundle, which he threw away, and during the last stage of his journey was able to get only some almost uneatable seal-flesh, which he found on the way. By the time Polaris House was reached, all were getting

very anxious about him. Mr. Bryan suffered much from snow-blindness, and it was several days before he fully recovered.

Comparatively safe as the life had been during many months, not one of the men could endure the thought of another similar winter; and now the boats were made and all was ready, the two crews were selected for the two boats. Captain Budington had the first choice, then Mr. Chester had the remainder for his boats; the numbers were equally divided. Early in June the boats started, and after this there was little comfort. Storms continued, and there was but little shelter among the ice and snow; for the nights were spent on shore, and sometimes the men were detained on land by the gales, with only the sails and boats to protect them. On June the 9th the men landed on Northumberland Island, safe at last from perils of the ice-pack. By reaching this island at this season it was earnestly hoped that whaling vessels might be seen; and if only one could be

signalled, all would be well. An anxious look-out was kept day by day, and in the middle of June came the glad tidings from Mr. Chester, 'Ship ahoy!' Strange was the sensation to all the men. They instantly sent up their flag, hoisted on two oars; and, better still, soon came back a reply signal from the ship out at sea that they were seen.

The vessel proved to be the Ravenscraig, commanded by Captain William Allen, of Kirkcaldy, Scotland. Captain Budington and his party of thirteen men were received and treated with the greatest kindness on board. Good news awaited them there, that the remainder of the Polaris expedition, left on the ice-floe, had been picked up. This filled them with such thankfulness, after the many perils they had gone through, that they felt the one great God over all had guarded and preserved each one, and given strength to survive their many perils. It can easily be imagined how sound was the first sleep on sofas and beds, all given up to

the weary travellers, and most fully could they appreciate all the kindness lavished upon them.

Twenty of the crew started to walk to the deserted boats, and brought back Mr. Chester's little craft, which was eventually presented to the Smithsonian Institution, and has since been shown at different exhibitions.

The Ravenscraig had been detained by the ice, and now had much difficulty in making any progress; and very slow it was until they reached Lancaster Sound. Soon after this she met the steamer Arctic, when half the men from the Polaris went on board her, and this added much comfort to the overcrowded Ravenscraig. Then this ship was further relieved of her Arctic explorers by the steamer Intrepid, whose captain, eager also to show a kindness to the heroes from the North, induced some of them to come on board of her.

Thus they reached Scotland in detachments and there much kindness was shown

them, perhaps the greatest being a speedy and free passage home by the Inman line. They finally reached Washington on the 7th of October, 1873.

CHAPTER VII.

ADRIFT ON AN ICE-FLOE.

BUT all these months had gone by, and though we have just heard of the actual safety of the ice-floe party, we have yet to hear of their experiences. Captain Tyson was their commander, and we must return to that fearful night in October, 1872. After the first horror of seeing their ship go forth into the darkness, the men at once set to work fighting for life. The boats were launched, and the other men and stores floating on the different pieces of ice were brought back to the main floe, amidst much peril and difficulty. This party, with its women and children, numbered no less than nineteen human beings, ten of the crew from

America, and nine Esquimaux. All the food which had been saved was fourteen cans of pemmican, twelve bags of bread, eleven dozen cans of meat and soups, one can of dried apples, fourteen hams, and a small bag of chocolate; there were also the two whale-boats from the Polaris, and two kyacks.

As soon as daylight came there was an anxious look out for the Polaris, and she was seen some miles distant rounding a point; but no reply was made to the signals from the floe party. This was terribly disheartening, but was from no lack of attention on the part of the Polaris, for Mr. Chester says, 'I was up and down the masthead all day, every ten or fifteen minutes, until we got near to the land. I went up there to look for our lost parties, but I could not see them at all.'

The party left on the ice now tried to reach the land, which was not far distant; but a gale came on, obliging some of the men to leave one of the boats, as the

ice broke, and the piece on which the people were together only measured one hundred and fifty yards across each way. The position continued to be perilous indeed; there was the constant risk of the ice breaking up. As weeks went by, the men grew weak and ill; and though the Esquimaux caught seals sometimes, much hunger was endured, and the children cried and suffered greatly. So acute at last was the hunger, that when a seal was caught it was eaten uncooked, with the skin on. Life became monotonous and depressing in the extreme, for in December there was only two hours of twilight, their brightest light.

In January it was intensely cold. All the dogs had been shot but one, and one of the Esquimaux children was very ill. In February there was very little food left, and the rations were but seven ounces a day; and in March this allowance was again reduced to one-half! That same day the poor sufferers were gladdened by the sight

of thirty-seven dovekies brought in by the hunters. Two were given to each of the men, and one apiece to the children. Everything was eaten but the feathers; with these dovekies no bread was served out.

In March also there was other danger besides that of starvation; for it was found that the floe was breaking up, and during one bad gale none could sleep. The floe after this was reduced to seventy-five square yards. It was a fearful time, and the storm lasted sixty hours. Soon after this a fat bear was killed, also some seals; and the floe party seemed to hover between life and death.

On April the 1st it was necessary to abandon the floe altogether, and take to their one boat, the other having been lost. To do this the men had to throw much food and clothing away, as the boat was only intended to carry eight men, and had on board twelve men, two women, and five children. After going some miles in the pack, they landed on the ice, though a dan-

gerous sea was running and the ice breaking away from their floe and carrying some things with it. On April the 8th fresh danger came. A terrific storm was blowing, and there was no sleep or rest for any one. The ice suddenly broke between the tent and the boat, and Mr. Meyer, with the boat and kyack, was separated from the rest of the party. The natives went in search of him in the darkness, and succeeded in reaching him. This was all that was possible till daylight came, then the others joined in his rescue. The boat was brought back, but Mr. Meyer, who had fallen into the water, was almost frozen to death.

The day following these poor sufferers were almost washed off the ice by the water dashing around them. Although no boat could have lived in such a sea, it was got ready, and the women and children placed in it. There was not a dry place to stand upon, nor could any fresh water to drink be obtained. The state of things was getting desperate. No seals could be caught, and

starvation was at hand. The men grew day by day weaker, and only equal to one hour's watch at a time. Eight days passed in this terrible imprisonment.

On Friday, April 18th, came deliverance from starvation, when a seal was caught and was divided between the party. Some days after the situation again became most critical. Heavy seas swept over the ice, carrying away the tent and even the bedding. The one and only thought now was to save the precious boat, their one bare chance of life. The men tried to fasten it, but without success. 'Every fifteen minutes during one frightful night a sea came which lifted the boat and carried the men with it to the opposite edge of the ice, where the sea lost its strength. The interval between the seas was passed in getting the boat back to the weather edge of the floe.' Thus did these brave men work from nine one evening till seven the next morning: their only words were: 'Hold on!' 'Bear down!' 'Put on all your weight!'

After this they managed to reach a safer piece of ice, but again had nothing to eat. Once more a merciful deliverance was at hand, for a bear was caught. Several vain attempts were made to reach the land on different days, but the ice was too compact and the weather too bad. Yet another danger came at this time : they were fearful of the icebergs around them, which were making tremendous noises by their constant collisions.

A sore disappointment happened on April the 28th. The floe party were gladdened by the sight of a steamer working her way through the ice, and at once signalled as best they could ; but night was coming on, and the steamer did not see them. Fires were now made on the ice to attract the passing vessels, and none seemed able to sleep, buoyed up with fresh hope, and the following day the reward seemed to come. By firing pistols, the steamer was attracted, and answered by firing three shots, and at once changed her course. But, alas ! the

captain did not see the little party on the ice, and had no idea of the distress so near. This vessel proved to be the Eagle. While they were anxiously looking for her, another steamer was seen, and this time the vessel did not pass away.

Succour had come to the brave, patient, weary, shipwrecked people. They could not wait to be picked up, but leaving the little they had, they got into their boat, and soon were safely on board the Tigress, a sealer, of Conception Bay, Newfoundland, whose commander was Captain Bartlett. Strange indeed must have been the luxury of a good bed and food, and very warm was the welcome all received. The men suffered very much on returning to civilized life. The rescue had come only just in time, since two or three days afterwards a terrible storm raged, which must have been fatal on the floe. The men, saved from their many perils, were filled with thankfulness to the Almighty, who had given them strength for their great need. A loving Heavenly

Father had indeed snatched them from a watery grave!

The United States Government received a telegram from Newfoundland announcing the safety of the party, and at once ordered the steamer Frolic to go to St. John's for the rescued Arctic travellers. She was detained some time, but eventually the little party, with their head, Captain Tyson, arrived safely at Washington, June 5th, 1873, having been parted from their comrades eight months, and having endured a life on the ice-floe of fully seven months' duration.

Thus ends the sad story of the Polaris expedition. Yet it was a glad ending; the only life lost being that of their noble commander.

The tragic tale illustrates afresh the courage and endurance of American seamen. It also shows that in the hope of benefiting commerce and extending the trade of nations, men are not only willing to risk their lives, but can undertake these duties and endure

these privations, as Captain Hall and his noble helpers did, in reliance upon the care and aid of the loving Father in heaven.

One reason why tales of Arctic adventure usually fascinate readers of all ages, and especially the young, is that they tell of great privations endured and heroic actions done for an unselfish motive. Captain Hall spent years in the frigid zone, and at last gave his life in the effort to reach the North Pole.

But it is not necessary to go to the Far North to live noble and unselfish lives. In the humblest life, and amid the lowliest duties, a brave, self-denying spirit may be shown. He who died for the salvation of sinners, and by the shedding of Whose blood they are cleansed from all sin, gives this as the rule of life for all, young and old: 'If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what shall a man be

profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?'

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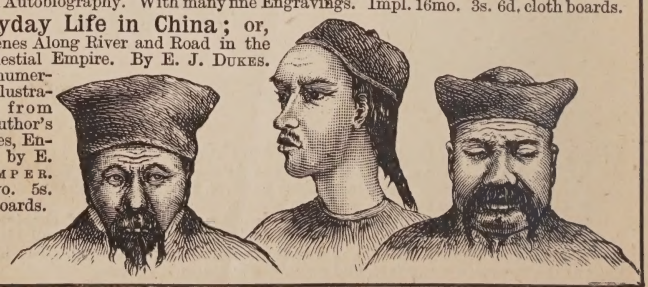

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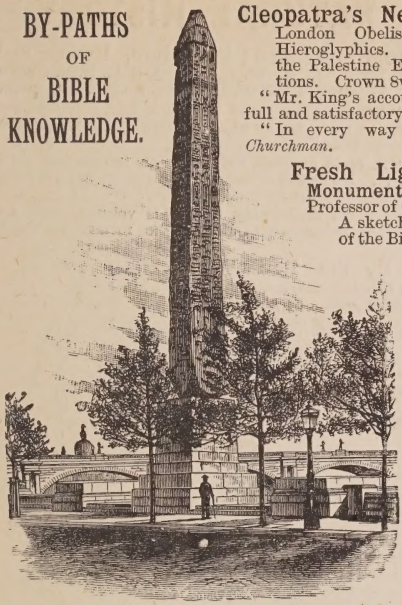

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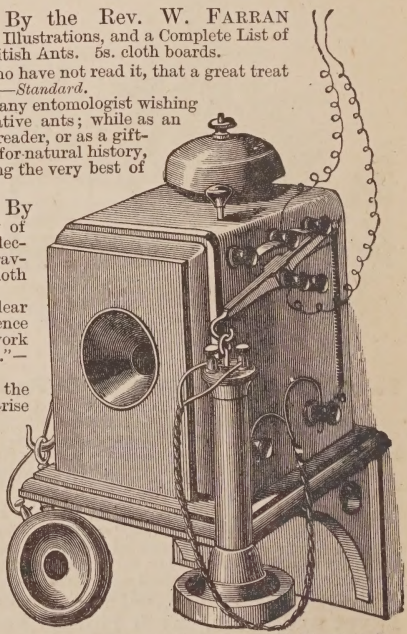

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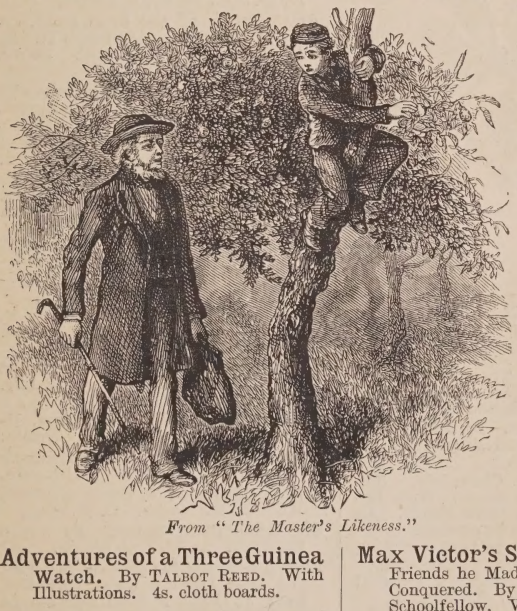

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